[11th March 1955

rules is under the consideration of the Government. As soon as such rules are finalised, the question of making the department permanent will be taken up.''

Panchayat Board elections

9-10 a.m. * 1268 *Q.*—SRI M. DHARMALINGAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any petitions were received by the Government to enquire into the irregularities committed by the election officers while conducting panchayat board elections; and

(*b*) if so, the number of such petitions and the action taken by the Government?

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—'' (*a*) Yes, Sir.

'' (*b*) Two hundred and fifteen petitions were received by the Government since November 1952 when elections to panchayats had started. As the Government cannot interfere in election disputes, the petitioners were asked to seek redress from election courts, as provided under the rules relating to the decision of election disputes issued under section 112 (2) (i) of the Madras Village Panchayats Act, 1950.''

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—'' Are the Government aware of the fact that election disputes arise on account of the defective rules that the Government have framed like show of hands for election to minor panchayat and that the election officer does not keep himself above suspicion with the result that the parties concerned are not in a position to go to higher authorities for getting their grievances redressed? Will the Government, therefore, revise the rules so as to abolish the system of election by show of hands to minor panchayats? ''

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—'' Yes, Sir. The sugestion will be examined.''

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—'' Is it a fact that in some cases it is owing to the intervention of the Government that election disputes arise? To cite an example, in respect of the Ezom amsam, the Government stopped the election at the eleventh hour, and it is on account of the passing of such an order, election disputes arose in that area.''

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—'' The Government cannot interfere in election disputes. But at times, party feelings are roused in villages and the Government have to order a stay of elections in those villages.''

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—'' The method adopted by officers in conducting elections by show of hands is this. If there are five seats vacant in a panchayat board and if there are seven candidates contesting, he records the number of votes polled against

11th March 1955]

each one of the seven candidates. It may be that each voter votes for all the seven and the number of seats is only five. *Prima facie*, this is legally unsustainable. May I know how the Government propose to control this? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" The matter will have to be examined. I do not think it is good to have the system of show of hands for the purpose of election. We have now got the system of marking on ballot papers in respect of election to certain institutions. We have to examine the entire thing before we take a final decision in the matter."

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM :—" Even in the case of admitted irregularities on the part of election officers, may I know whether such cases are referred to the Election Tribunal for disposal or any departmental action is taken against the officers? "

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" In obvious cases, departmental action will be taken."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" May I draw the attention of the Hon. the Minister for Finance to the fact that the system of marking on ballot papers is adopted only in the case of district board and major panchayat elections and that as far as the minor panchayats are concerned, elections are conducted by show of hands only which has proved defective? Will the Government therefore reconsider the question of scrapping this method and instituting some other kind of election? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" That matter will be considered and that is what I said. This decision by show of hands is unsatisfactory. But in small areas, perhaps we cannot incur a large extra expenditure for the purpose of conducting elections. Therefore, a simpler and less costlier method should be adopted for this purpose and the Government will examine the entire question."

TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

Accreditation Committee for the Press

* 1269 Q.—SRI N. K. PALANISAMY: Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the State Government have received any communications from the Centre with regard to formation of Accreditation Committee for the Press at Madras; and

(*b*) if so, when this committee would be set up?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) The Government of India asked for the views of this Government on the recommendation of the Press Commission for the formation of Accreditation Committees in the States. This Government have accordingly communicated their views, which are now under the active consideration of the Centre.

" (*b*) The decision of the Government of India is awaited in the matter."